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**33 Questions about American History: You’re Not Supposed to Ask**

In formal education, American children were taught that Columbus was the first man to discover America. They were lied to. They discovered that the Native Americans (so-called Indians) were (probably) the first people to settle in America. According to the dark side of history, Columbus was an Indian killer and a slave owner. In his book, *the History of the People in the United States,* Howard Zinn mentioned that Thomas Jefferson stated in the Constitution of the United States of America “*that all men are created equal*.” Many people believed that Thomas Jefferson was claiming that **all men** are created equal. They did not know that women and minorities were excluded. All men who are created equal refer to the white elite. We must not forget that George Washington and Thomas Jefferson owned slaves. When people study mathematics and science, they get the facts. There are no secrets in learning these subjects. But when children are taught History, they are told many lies or given a watered down version of a true story. History is controlled by people of power. In history, we were taught that Abraham Lincoln ended slavery. According to research, we discovered the Abraham Lincoln did not care anything about African-Americans. Lincoln ended slavery in order to unite the Northern and Southern whites together. He wanted them to have a perfect or near perfect union. Lincoln did not want the nation to be divided. Many people believed that slavery was in the south and freedom was in the north. In the book, *Detroit Perspectives: Crossroads and Turning Points* Henricksonstated that black slavery increased during the British period, reinforcing itself numerically through several channels. After the occupation of the city, the economic system remained the same excerpt that systematically British merchants took over the fur trade from the French until they controlled it absolutely by the 1780s. (Henrickson, 1991)

The truth, indeed, is something that mankind, for

Some mysterious reason instinctively dislikes.

Every man who tries to tell it is unpopular, an

Even when, by the sheer strength of his case, he

prevails, he is put down as a scoundrel.

--- H.L. Mencken

In the book, *33 Questions About American History: You’re Not Supposed to Ask*, Thomas E. Woods Jr. mentioned that history has many hoaxes to it. This book talks about 33 American historical events that have a different and dark side to it. Out of 33 stories, 3 are mentioned in this essay. Woods mentioned that the so-called founding fathers did not fully support immigration. They did not wish to eliminate it altogether, but saw no need to encourage it, especially among migrants (Native-and African-Americans) whose racial backgrounds were different from their own. (Woods, 2007) *The Kings of New York* was a perfect example of this. The founding fathers believed that if the immigrants and people of color alienated their nation, they (founding fathers’ culture) would be eliminated from the globe. The white race would be erased. Washington, Lincoln, Roosevelt, and Thomas wanted a pure white American nation for themselves. (Woods, 2007)

Woods goes on to say that the Native Americans were not environmentalists. Most people believed that the Native Americans were in tuned with nature. Television displays Native Americans being in tuned with nature. The Indians used to get their medicines from the rain forests. The rainforests was important to the Native-Americans before the white man came and burned it down. According to the book, it is shocking to discover that the Choctaw and Iroquois Indians were known to cut and burn forests in order to make new farmland available. When the soils weaken, Native Americans cut and burned most forests. Wooden areas were also cleared to increase hunting for deer, elk, and bison. Though in some cases such burning may have made sense, it contradicts the idea that the Indians left the natural world altogether untouched. Some scholars believed that there may have been fewer such forests in America when the white man arrived than there are today. According to the book, the “truth” is that the American Indian practice slash-and-burned agriculture, destroyed forests and grasslands, and wiped put the entire animal population. In my opinion, the Native-Americans probably did this for survival for food, clothing and shelter. (Woods, 2007)

Last but not least, Woods mentioned that it is a myth that segregation of schools-even *de facto* segregation-harms the self-esteem of minority students and leads to poor educational performance. By desegregation schools, we will close the educational achievement gap. The fact is the black-white educational gap which is big as four grade levels in some subjects is alive and well despite decades of desegregation effects and has shown no greater improvement in integrated schools than in largely black ones. Since the Brown vs. Board of Education it was supposed to end segregated schools. In desegregated schools, African-American students do poorly than white and Asian students. American students are continuously being mis-educated and under-educated. Students who live in poverty most likely do poorly in school than the middle and upper class students. All children deserve the same quality of education. For many years, African-American students were not taught their history. When the Black Muslims evolved in Detroit, they created their owned schools. Today, it is segregated. According to research, the Black Muslims used the old textbooks from formal schools. They taught their children a step ahead than other black children who were taught in public schools. The Muslim children were taught the knowledge of themselves and history. Furthermore, they had top scores on the California Achievement Test (CAT). To the Black Muslims, education is a must. I agree with Woods that black children do not achieve as much in many desegregation schools. Previously, they did not achieve in segregated schools because they did not have all the tools and resources compared to the white schools. Black children are still at the bottom. (Woods, 2011)

In conclusion, this is a very interesting book to read. I will encourage students to read and do research on historical events. I did not get a chance to read everything in the book. However, I will encourage students to read it. They should think for themselves. The Webquest website is a good resource for teachers to use in teaching their class. The Webquest website gives good information to teachers to teach their class about every subject. Teachers can do Venn diagrams, scaffolding, KWL charts, web concepts etc. Every book has its own perspective. Read as many books as you can. So far, I agree with most of Woods’ comments in his book. History has a bright and dark side to it. Everybody has secrets but cannot tell it. Teachers cannot tell it because they may lose their jobs. According to the John Dewey’s book, the *Philosophy of Education*, he mentioned that children are supposed to participate in cooperative learning. We are supposed to work together and share ideas. Children learn best when they work cooperatively no matter what color they are.

**Resources**

**33 Questions About American History: You’re Not Support to Ask**. Thomas E. Woods. Jr. 2007. Random House Inc. Crown Forum. New York.

**Detroit Perspectives: Crossroads and Turning Points.** By Wilma Wood Henrickson. Wayne State University. 1991.Detroit